



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

MENU >




If You Have Pets

Updated Sept. 9, 2020

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What you need to know

- A small number of pets worldwide, including cats and dogs, have been [reported](#)  to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after close contact with people with COVID-19.
- Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.
- It appears that the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread from people to animals in some situations.
- Treat pets as you would other human family members – do not let pets interact with people outside the household.
- If a person inside the household becomes sick, isolate that person from everyone else, including pets.
- This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available.




For more information on COVID and Animals

See [COVID-19 and Animals](#) and [COVID-19 and Animals Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some coronaviruses cause cold-like illnesses in people, while others cause illness in certain types of animals, such as cattle, camels, and bats. Some coronaviruses, such as canine and feline coronaviruses, infect only animals and do not infect humans.

Risk of people spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 to pets

We are still learning about the virus that causes COVID-19, but it appears that it can spread from people to animals in some situations. A small number of pets worldwide, including cats and dogs, have been [reported](#)  to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after close contact with people with COVID-19.

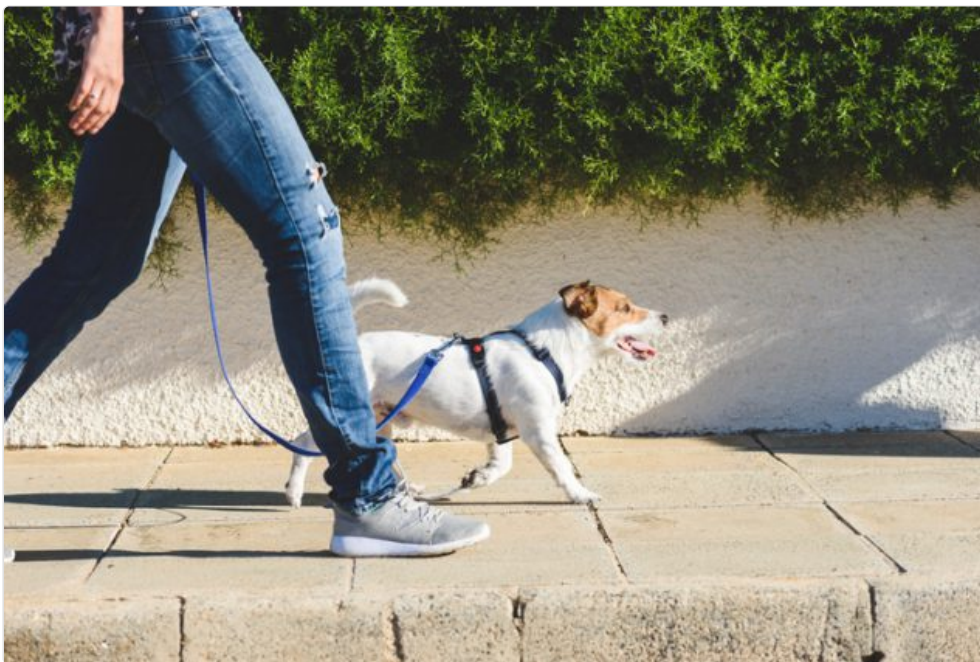
Infected pets might get sick or they might not have any symptoms. Of the pets that have gotten sick, most only had mild illness and fully recovered.

What to do if you own pets

Until we learn more about how this virus affects animals, treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from a possible infection.

Because there is a risk that people with COVID-19 could spread the virus to animals, CDC recommends that pet owners limit their pet's interaction with people outside their household.

- Keep cats indoors when possible and do not let them roam freely outside.
- Walk dogs on a leash at least 6 feet (2 meters) away from others.
- Avoid public places where a large number of people gather.
- Do not put a mask on pets. Masks could harm your pet.



There is no evidence that the virus can spread to people from the skin, fur, or hair of pets. Do not wipe or bathe your pet with chemical disinfectants, alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, or other products, such as hand sanitizer, counter-cleaning wipes, or other industrial or surface cleaners. Talk to your veterinarian if you have questions about appropriate products for bathing or cleaning your pet.

Talk to your veterinarian if your pet gets sick or if you have any concerns about your pet's health. [🔗](#)



Questions about keeping your pet safe?

See [Frequently Asked Questions about Animals and COVID-19](#).

Protect pets if you are sick

If you are sick with COVID-19 (either suspected or confirmed by a test), you should restrict contact with your pets and other animals, just like you would with people. Until we know more about this virus, people sick with COVID-19 should **avoid contact with pets and other animals**.

- When possible, have another member of your household care for your pets while you are sick.
- Avoid contact with your pet including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, sharing food, and sleeping in the same bed.

- If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a mask and wash your hands before and after you interact with them.

If you are sick with COVID-19 and your pet becomes sick, **do not take your pet to the veterinary clinic yourself**. Call your veterinarian and let them know you have been sick with COVID-19. Some veterinarians may offer telemedicine consultations or other plans for seeing sick pets. Your veterinarian can evaluate your pet and determine the next steps for your pet's treatment and care.

For more information visit: [What to Do if You are Sick](#).



Stay healthy around animals

In the United States, there is no evidence that animals are playing a significant role in the spread of COVID-19. Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low. However, because all animals can carry germs that can make people sick, it's always a good idea to practice [healthy habits](#) around pets and other animals.

- Wash your hands after handling animals, their food, waste, or supplies.
- Practice good pet hygiene and clean up after pets properly.
- Talk to your veterinarian if you have questions about your pet's health.
- Be aware that [children 5 years of age and younger](#), people with weakened immune systems, and older adults are more likely to get sick from germs some animals can carry.

For more information, visit CDC's [COVID-19 and Animals](#) webpage and [Healthy Pets, Healthy People website](#).

Guidance and recommendations

- [What to Do if Your Pet Tests Positive for the Virus that Causes COVID-19](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Public Health Professionals Managing People with COVID-19 in Home Care and Isolation Who Have Pets or Other Animals](#)
- [Interim recommendations for intake of companion animals from households where humans with COVID-19 are present](#) [🔗](#)
- [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics](#)
- [Evaluation for SARS-CoV-2 Testing in Animals](#)
- [Guidance for Handlers of Service and Therapy Animals](#)

More Information

[COVID-19 and Animals](#)

[COVID-19 and Animals : Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Information on Bringing an Animal into the United States](#)

[World Organisation for Animal Health: Q&As on COVID-19](#) 

[USDA: Coronavirus Disease 2019](#) 

[FDA: Coronavirus Disease 2019](#) 

[USDA Statement on the Confirmation of COVID-19 Infection in a Tiger in New York](#) 

[Confirmation of COVID-19 in Two Pet Cats in New York](#)

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Content source: National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases